
State Government Committee

HB 2667

Brief Description: Directing lobbyists to disclose required information in an electronic format.

Sponsors: Representatives Moeller, Santos, Upthegrove, Chase, Hudgins, Lovick, Morrell, Simpson, G., Anderson, Miloscia and Kagi.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Beginning January 1, 2007, requires lobbyists whose total reportable accrued compensation and expenses total \$25,000, to file reports with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) electronically. The dollar threshold for this requirement is lowered to \$10,000 beginning January 1, 2009.
- Beginning January 1, 2008, requires lobbyist employers whose total reportable accrued expenses and payments for lobbying are \$25,000 to file reports with the PDC electronically. The dollar threshold for this requirement is lowered to \$10,000 beginning January 1, 2010.

Hearing Date: 1/30/04

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) was created and empowered by an initiative of the people to provide timely and meaningful public access to information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates, and to ensure compliance with contribution limits and other campaign finance restrictions.

During the 1997-1999 biennium, \$378,000 was appropriated to the PDC solely for technology for customer service improvements, including providing for the electronic filing of reports and electronic access of reports filed. The legislative intent was to ensure that the PDC provide the general public timely access to all contribution and expenditure reports submitted by candidates, continuing political committees, political parties, lobbyists, and lobbyists' employers.

The PDC was directed to set up a web site that allowed access to various reports and information filed with it. By January 1, 2000, information regarding political committees, continuing political committees, candidates' contributions and expenditures, independent expenditures, and "late"

contributions were to be available on the web, and by February 1, 2001, lobbyists, lobbyist "late" contributions and employers of registered lobbyist reports would be accessible.

Currently, candidates and political committees that expended \$25,000 or more in the previous year, or who expect to expend \$25,000 or more in the current year, are required to file reports to the PDC electronically using an electronic format provided by the PDC. The dollar threshold for this requirement is lowered to \$10,000 beginning January 1, 2004. The PDC is allowed by make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

Summary of Bill:

Certain lobbyists and lobbyist employers are required to file reports electronically.

Effective January 1, 2007, lobbyists whose total reportable accrued compensation and expenses total \$25,000 or more in the previous year, or are expected to be \$25,000 or more in the current year, are required to file reports with the PDC electronically using an electronic format provided by the PDC. The dollar threshold for this requirement is lowered to \$10,000 beginning January 1, 2009.

Beginning January 1, 2008, lobbyist employers whose total reportable accrued expenses and payments for lobbying are \$25,000 or more in the previous year, or are expected to be \$25,000 or more in the current year, are required to file reports with the PDC electronically using an electronic format provided by the PDC. The dollar threshold for this requirement is lowered to \$10,000 beginning January 1, 2010.

Technical changes to statute are also made.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.